

# Gnau takes road seat with no opposition

By ROBERT KIPPER

OAKLAND COUNTY—There was no opposition Tuesday as John Gnau Jr. assumed his seat as the new county road commissioner. Former road commissioner Frazer Starnan apparently decided not to contest Gnau's seating. Last week, Starnan hinted that he was considering challenging the authority of the Oakland County Board of Commissioners to appoint Gnau, or anyone else, as his replacement.

Starnan's challenge would have been based on the county board's failure to name Starnan's successor until after his term expired. Some sources argued that because Starnan's term carried over to the new year, he might legally be able to remain on the road commission.

NEITHER THAT challenge, nor much of anything else materialized at Tuesday's regularly scheduled road commission meeting. Amid routine business and ex-

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changed pleasantries, Gnau joined the two other members of the commission. Gnau, a Bloomfield Township millionaire, announced he wouldn't use a county-owned automobile, which he's entitled to as a road commissioner. He will continue driving his 1973 Imperial.

Gnau's appointment to the road commission generated some controversy because of Gnau's connections with County Executive Daniel Murphy. Gnau contributed \$1,000 to Murphy's campaign for county executive and served as his finance chairman.

FRED HARRIS, the new chairman of the road commission, welcomed Gnau and pointed out that he and Gnau have known each other since their grade school days together. William Richards, the third commissioner, said he looked forward to working with Gnau in what he hoped would be two progressive years of problem-solving.

Gnau agreed that the road commission had many problems that needed tending to. He mentioned dwindling operating funds and the need to upgrade the county road network as two urgent problems.

ONE OF THE problems that Gnau previously named as very urgent was solved last week.

Nineteen of the 27 road commission employees who were laid off shortly after Christmas will be working again. The remaining former employees will now qualify for federal unemployment compensation.

The 19 will be rehired with federal funds from the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA), which provides for the creation of public service jobs as a means of fighting unemployment. These men will be classified as "road laborers" and receive \$8,000 per year.

The other eight former employees will receive unemployment com-

pensation thanks to the recently-passed Emergency Jobs and Unemployment Compensation Act of 1974.

The law covers persons, such as the former road commission employees, who aren't otherwise protected by some form of unemployment insurance.

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## Committee approves Murphy's salary plan

OAKLAND COUNTY—County Executive Daniel Murphy maintains that his county reorganization plan will still cost only \$100,000 despite his request last week for \$275,000 to pay for new positions.

The money, approved Friday by the county board's personnel practices committee, will cover the salaries for nine persons: the heads of Murphy's six superdepartments; his deputy county executive, and his press secretary and minority affairs assistant. The salaries, which must still be approved by the full board of commissioners, are a maximum of \$35,000 for the deputy executive, a \$33,000 maximum for the department heads, and a \$31,000 maximum for the press and minority affairs positions.

WHEN MURPHY argued for these salaries, he said they must be attractive enough to enable him to fill the new positions, whenever possible, with existing county employees.

Most of those now on the county payroll who are candidates for the new positions are protected by the merit system. Generous salaries, Murphy argued, will make these employees less hesitant about surrendering merit system protection for the new jobs, which aren't so protected.

Murphy said he plans to hire from the outside only when a current employee can't be promoted to the new post.

In many instances, when a current employee is promoted his old position will be eliminated.

The money saved by discontinuing certain high-paid positions will keep the cost of reorganization around \$100,000, Murphy said, even with the positions that will be filled from the outside.

MURPHY HAS said that he couldn't

## Activities to begin

Teach Learn Communicate (TLC) winter activities at Beverly Elementary School will begin the week of Jan. 30. Classes will meet one day each week for eight weeks for approximately one hour each.

Registration will take place from 3 to 4:30 and 7:30 to 9 p.m. Tuesday and from 9:30 to 11 a.m. Wednesday at the school, 18305 Beverly Road, Beverly Hills.

Classes are offered for adults as well as children. New adult classes being offered for the first time include paper tote, couples open volleyball, women's volleyball, men's basketball, intermediate bridge, beginning guitar and "Helping Your Children Understand Their Sexuality."

New classes for young people include beginning ballet, advanced beginner's guitar and gym. A pre school story hour for youngsters from three to five will be offered at the same time as the women's volleyball class. There is no fee for the three new sports classes for adults or for the class on helping children understand their sexuality but registration is required.

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